

CLIMATOLOGICAL DATA FOR MARCH, 1913.

DISTRICT NO 5, UPPER MISSISSIPPI VALLEY.

GEO. M. CHAPPEL, District Editor.

Destructive wind and ice storms, damaging floods, and record-breaking low temperatures contributed to make the month a memorable one. As a whole, the weather was cold, wet, and windy; it was one of the windiest months on record. The most notable event, perhaps, was the occurrence of a series of destructive windstorms on the night of the 23d, in connection with the Omaha tornado. There is little, if any, evidence of tornadic action in the fifth climatological district, however, the winds being straight line squalls accompanying thunderstorms. No lives are known to have been lost in the Iowa area, but the property loss in the whole State is estimated by insurance companies at \$1,000,000. The section director of Illinois comments on this storm in that State under another heading. Severe windstorms prevailed also on the 13th-14th and 20th-21st in connection with marked cyclonic disturbances that passed over the district on those dates. The barometric pressure was unusually low in the storm of the 13th-14th, the sea-level reading at Des Moines, Iowa, at 7 a. m., on the 14th, being 28.98 inches, or next to the lowest on record. This storm was attended by heavy precipitation in southeastern Minnesota and southern Wisconsin, which resulted in damaging floods in those sections. The storm of the 20th-21st was most severe over the northern third of Illinois, high winds and an "ice storm" causing considerable loss to electric services. Immediately following the windstorm of the 23d was a four-day period of almost continuously heavy rainfall over the southeastern end of the district, more than 7 inches falling over the wettest area. As a result a rapid rise occurred in all the streams and rivers of that section, and disastrous floods ensued. A more detailed account of these floods appears elsewhere. A cold wave of great severity for the time of year swept over the district at the beginning of the month, the temperature falling to the lowest point on record for March over much of the Iowa area and in northern Illinois. The unfavorable conditions throughout the district retarded all kinds of outdoor work, and vegetation had made little progress at the close of the month. Good drying weather obtained during the last three or four days, however.

The following table presents, in condensed form, the leading features of climatological interest for the various parts of the district:

Parts of States within District 5.	Temperature.				Precipitation.					
	Mean.	Departure.	Highest.	Lowest.	Average.	Departure.	Greatest total.	Least total.	Average snowfall.	Average number of days with precipitation.
North Dakota.....	15.3	-6.1	61	-31	0.67	-0.21	2.75	0.10	6.2	6
Minnesota.....	20.4	-4.2	65	-38	1.21	+0.05	3.48	0.10	8.5	8
South Dakota.....	22.8	-6.2	64	-22	1.37	+0.62	0.92	0.42	5.2	6
Wisconsin.....	24.9	-2.7	68	-39	2.84	+1.10	5.59	1.00	10.2	10
Iowa.....	31.7	-1.9	78	-20	2.71	+0.68	5.58	0.80	5.8	10
Missouri.....	38.1	-3.5	76	-12	3.92	+1.34	6.24	1.52	4.2	8
Indiana.....	35.2	-3.7	71	-5	5.27	+1.48	6.32	3.11	10.1	14
Illinois.....	36.3	-2.5	78	-12	4.88	+1.85	9.68	1.42	6.2	11

TEMPERATURE.

The month was colder than usual throughout the district, but over the southern half of it the average temperature was not more than 2° lower than the normal. The deficiency was greatest in the extreme north, where it amounted to about 6° a day, the month there being the coldest March since 1899, and one of the three or four coldest in the last 40 years. The lowest mean temperature, 9.2°, occurred at Hannah, N. Dak., and three other stations in that State reported a mean of 10°. Only in extreme southern Illinois was the average temperature above 40°, Cairo, Ill., with a mean of 46.6°, being the warmest point in the district. The variations in temperature from day to day were among the most pronounced of record for March.

The most interesting event was the cold wave at the beginning of the month. Not only did it cause the coldest weather of the entire winter at some stations, but all previous records for low temperatures in March were broken over much of the Iowa territory and part of Illinois. A minimum temperature of -12° occurred as far south as Sublett, Mo., and the line of -20° extended southward into Iowa. In a remarkable rise in temperature this cold wave was quickly superseded by seasonable conditions. A second cold spell of note followed within a few days; it was attended by the lowest temperature of the month in the district, -39° being reported on the 7th from Long Lake, Wis. This cold spell was not of such widespread character as was its predecessor, being confined largely to the northeast. No unseasonably high temperatures occurred, and there was no warm spell of a general character. The highest monthly temperature at the various stations was recorded mostly on the 8th, 12th, 19th, 23d, or 28th-31st. The highest temperature was 78° at several stations in Illinois on the 23d or 24th, and at one station in Iowa on the 30th.

PRECIPITATION.

An excess of precipitation was almost general, save in the extreme north. In southern Illinois, where the heaviest falls occurred, upward of 8 inches were reported from half a dozen stations, Ewing, near the border of the fourth climatological district, having 9.68 inches. The average for the entire district was 2.80 inches, or 0.92 inch greater than the normal. The least amount was 0.10 inch, at Wahpeton, N. Dak., and Pierz, Minn.

Precipitation was of frequent occurrence in all parts of the district, the only dry period of note covering the last five days of the month. The sunshiny weather at that time was of great benefit to the flooded districts. Three precipitation periods outrank any others of the month, namely, those of the 13th-14th, 20th-21st, and 23d-26th. The latter was the most important, the resulting rainfall causing disastrous floods that are referred to elsewhere. At Ewing, Ill., the precipitation for this period was 7.40 inches, and more than 5 inches fell over a large area in southern Illinois.

Snowfall.—A measurable amount of snowfall was reported from every station in the district except two, Keokuk, Iowa, and Macon, Mo.; at those stations only

traces occurred. The heaviest fall was 30 inches at New Richmond, Wis., and the heaviest State average was 10.2 inches for the same State. In that State the snow covering was of considerable depth at the beginning of the month, but at the close this condition existed only in the extreme northern counties; in Vilas County the amounts ranged from 8 to 16 inches.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The sunshine was deficient in all parts of the district, but the departures from normal were not large. The average number of clear days was 10; partly cloudy, 9; cloudy, 12. Northwesterly winds prevailed, except over the southeast, where they were southwesterly. The wind movement was among the greatest on record for any month. At Des Moines, Iowa, it was the windiest month since March, 1902. The highest velocity reported was 60 miles an hour from the northeast on the 14th, at Minneapolis, Minn.

Cairo, Ill., and its vicinity was visited by a hailstorm of unusual severity on the 25th; considerable damage was done to windows and hotbeds. The hailstones were of large size; one that fell on the window ledge of the local office of the Weather Bureau measured $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch in diameter across its widest part and about $\frac{1}{2}$ an inch across its narrowest part. Many hailstones apparently as large as the one measured were noted.

RIVERS.

But little of moment occurred in the streams of the far north, normal stages prevailing. The floods in southeastern Minnesota and southwestern Wisconsin have already been referred to. The ice in the Mississippi at Dubuque, Iowa, began breaking up on the 11th, and on the 13th, about 10 p. m., it moved out without damage. The crest of a rise in the Mississippi passed Davenport, Iowa, at 6 p. m. of the 27th, when a stage of 12.9 feet was reached; this is 2.1 feet below the flood stage. No damage of any consequence resulted from the high water in the Davenport river district. At Keokuk, Iowa, the Mississippi was within 2 feet of flood stage at the close of the month.

Commenting on flood conditions in Illinois, Clarence J. Root, section director, states: Heavy rains fell over the district on the 20th-21st, and almost continuously from the 23d to the 26th. During the latter period the rainfall exceeded 4 inches over that part of the fifth climatological district lying east and south of Springfield. At most of the stations the amounts exceeded 5 inches, and at three of them more than 7 inches fell. As a result of these unusual rains the creeks and smaller rivers soon became raging torrents. Many of the smaller streams began to recede after the 26th and the medium-sized rivers after the 28th, but the Illinois River and the Mississippi below the mouth of the Illinois continued to rise until after the close of the month. The floods in many of the smaller streams were the worst in years, if not in the history of this section. Record stages were reported at Clinton on Salt Creek, Oreg., on Rock River, and in all the smaller streams in the counties lying east of St. Louis, Mo. In other sections the water was higher than in many years.

The Fox River at Aurora was within 7 inches of the highest mark ever reached, but no damage resulted at that point. In the creeks and smaller rivers bridges, trestles, and tracks were washed out or covered with water, and railroad traffic was greatly interfered with. Lowlands

were inundated, residents were forced to seek shelter on high ground, and the property loss will be heavy. The situation at Cairo at the close of the month was critical. The official at that point will report at the termination of the flood.

Kaskaskia (Okaw) River: The levee at Vandalia broke on the 25th, and newspapers reported 60,000 acres under water. At Carlyle the river rose until the 28th and then fell steadily. It did not reach the 1908 stage by 16 inches.

Sangamon River: On the 26th this stream was rising at the rate of 2 inches an hour and bottoms were flooded. During the night of the 26th-27th the water rose 22 inches, and on the 27th residents living near the river were leaving their homes. The Springfield waterworks was entirely surrounded by water, but a waterproof wall gave ample protection to the plant. The crest of the flood near Springfield was reached at 6 p. m. on the 27th. The Chicago, Peoria, & St. Louis Railroad abandoned service between Springfield and Havana for several days on account of the loss of the bridge at Kilbourne and the insecurity of the Springfield bridge, and for nearly a week on the Jacksonville branch where the Sangamon River bridge was out. At Petersburg, Menard County, on the 28th the river inundated parts of the city to a depth of several feet. Families and property were removed to points of safety. According to press reports more than 100 families were forced to abandon their homes in the eastern end of the city.

By M. L. Fuller, Local Forecaster.—The Illinois River before the city was practically clear of ice by the 10th, though some remained farther up in Peoria Lake. Navigation opened on the 15th. The river was high from the 24th to the end of the month, reaching a stage of 22.3 feet at Peoria, which is the highest but one that has been attained since the local records began in May, 1882. The only higher stage recorded in that period was 23 feet in March, 1904.

Some damage was done by the high water to boat yards, cottages, club houses, etc., along the shores of Peoria Lake; and to ice houses, warehouse basements, factory plants, etc., along the river front of the city. The damage to cottages and boat houses, boats, etc., along the lake shore has been estimated at \$20,000; that in the factory district of the city, including expense entailed in moving stocks of goods, is estimated at \$15,000 to \$20,000. The terminal railway suffered to the extent of about \$2,500, along its tracks between Peoria and Pekin; and the Peoria & Pekin Union Railway about \$8,000 to \$10,000, along the same section of the river, but on the opposite side. Bottom lands all along the river are flooded, but not much more extensively than by the usual spring high water and without especial damage so far as reported. Drainage districts, protected by dikes, appear to have escaped damage through careful watching and strengthening of embankments. A slightly higher rise would have overcome all precautions and submerged several districts, it is said. (It was reported that one small district, the Hennepin, of 2,500 acres, was flooded, but no verification has been received. The Illinois Traction Interurban) lines estimate their total damage at about \$25,000; but this figure includes the lines extending to Springfield, Ill., and St. Louis, Mo., and may be partly duplicated in the other reports. Wagon roads and bridges along the river in Peoria and Tazewell Counties are damaged probably \$2,500.

By S. P. Peterson, Observer.—The river was over flood stage (18 feet) on all but one day of the month. On the

21st the stage was 20.1 feet, and the river rose steadily until the 29th, when a crest stage of 28 feet was reached. Since then the flood has been gradually receding, but the stage of the river is still high, being 25.8 feet to-day—April 5. All bottom lands in this vicinity are under water. The cellars of many stores and warehouses are flooded, but most of the goods contained in these were saved, on account of the timely warnings issued by the Weather Bureau. The high water has interfered with the operations of several manufactories. During the crest stage, the roadbed of the Interurban Railway was flooded in places to a depth of a few inches. The total damage done in this vicinity will amount to several thousand dollars.

TORNADO IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS.

By Prof. F. H. COLYER, Cooperative Observer, Carbondale, Ill.

On the evening of March 24 a tornado occurred in the vicinity of Makanda, Ill. The storm began about 7.10 p. m., 2½ miles west of Makanda, and moved almost directly northeast, the destructive part extending over a track about 25 miles long. The end of the destructive path was reached at 7.30 p. m., thus the forward movement of the storm was at the rate of 75 miles an hour. Although it was dark, many persons saw a well developed funnel cloud, because of the almost continuous lightning. Those who live near the edge of the storm's path say the funnel cloud was well marked, and that it rose and fell, as well as pitched from side to side, as it proceeded. For several hours preceding the storm's approach the clouds at Carbondale, Ill., showed rather remarkable conditions. Some moved from the southwest, others from the northwest, and still others from various directions. The temperature fluctuated rapidly, warm southwest winds at a temperature of 75° being replaced quickly by cold puffs from the northwest. Several of these periods occurred in the afternoon of the day of the storm.

On the north side of the storm's path trees were blown down so as to lie to the southeast, except where they were carried bodily into the whirl and dropped on its outer edge. On the south side they were generally thrown to the northeast. In the path of the greatest destruction the trees were thrown in all directions.

The width of the destructive path varied. At the point where an Illinois Central freight train was struck, 21 cars were blown out of a train of 41 cars. The engine and tender were left on the track at one end, and 20 cars at the other end. Ten of the 21 cars blown off the track were almost completely destroyed. The damage to this train is estimated at about \$17,500. The damage to farmers who were in the track of the storm was about \$30,000. Thirty-nine farmers sustained the loss of either the house or barn, or both.

Three persons were killed, and 10 injured. A number of persons escaped by going to basements or by crouching down by iron bedsteads, trunks, etc.

STORMS IN ILLINOIS—MARCH, 1913.

By C. J. Root, Section Director.

Severe local storms were reported on the 13th in La Salle County and at a number of places in west-central Illinois. Considerable damage from wind and lightning resulted to buildings and electrical equipment. Charles Gilpin, a farmer living near Jacksonville, was killed by a falling tree.

An ice and wind storm on the night of the 20th–21st in the northern third of the State caused considerable dam-

age to electrical services. Poles and wires were down in many sections, and wire service was poor for almost a week.

In the late evening of March 23 and early morning of the 24th severe windstorms visited many sections of the northern end of the State, the affected area extending from the Mississippi River to Lake Michigan. Similar storms were reported in Fulton and Christian Counties. While these storms were severe and destructive, there is little evidence of tornadic action. The losses were principally to barns, outbuildings, haystacks, fences, trees, and wires and poles, but damage to houses and substantial structures was reported in a number of places. At Des Plaines, near Chicago, two trainmen were killed when a chimney fell onto the caboose of a freight train passing through the town. At Erie a young woman was killed in the collapse of a house.

STORM OF MARCH 23, 1913, AT DAVENPORT, IOWA.

By J. M. SHERIER, Local Forecaster.

At 11.30 p. m. of March 23, 1913, this section was visited by the most destructive windstorm of recent years. The barometer, which had been falling steadily during the preceding 36 hours, reached its lowest point, 29.43 inches, reduced to sea level, at midnight of the 23d–24th. The temperature had risen from 34° at 7 a. m. to 66° at 11 p. m., and the conditions were oppressive during the evening and before 11.25 p. m., notwithstanding the fact that the wind increased after sunset and frequently exceeded a rate of 30 miles per hour after 7.30 p. m. Clouds had covered the sky until nearly 8 p. m., with rain from during night (a. m.) to 1.25 p. m., and a light thunderstorm from 4.44 p. m. to 7.23 p. m. Partly cloudy weather prevailed from 8 p. m. to 9 p. m., after which time it was again generally cloudy. At 10 p. m. heavy stratus clouds were observed coming from the southwest, which overspread all except the southern third of the sky by the time the opposite horizon had been reached. In addition to their progressive motion from the southwest, there was a tumultuous movement on the part of the swiftly moving fracto-stratus clouds that suggested the wave motion of a large body of water. Until 10.45 p. m. a remarkably even border was maintained along the southern edge of the field of lower clouds, beyond which only occasional fracto-cumulus clouds were seen to go.

South of this border, and especially in the vicinity of the moon, the light cirro-stratus clouds had a greenish-yellow color, resembling that of cheese. Shortly after 11 p. m. the sky became entirely overcast, but there was at no time any formation that indicated the presence of a vortex, though the pitching motion, already mentioned, was particularly marked between 11.30 p. m. and midnight. At 11.25 p. m. the wind suddenly increased in force, reaching an extreme velocity of 60 miles per hour 5 minutes later and maintaining an average velocity of 48 miles per hour from 11.26 p. m. to 11.31 p. m., after which time the rate of movement decreased. A second furious squall began at 12.05 a. m. of the 24th and lasted until 12.30 a. m., with an extreme velocity of 42 miles per hour at 12.07 a. m. When the wind was highest it appeared to come in a rapid succession of gusts and to have an unusual upward force, causing in houses of ordinary construction a vibration similar to that imparted to a vessel by the motion of its screw. At the time of the highest velocity the wind was fairly steady from the southwest and was at all times from some point in the quadrant from south to west. All wreckage, so far as observations extend, was carried to the eastward of its original position.

TABLE 3.—*Maximum and minimum temperatures for March, 1913. District No. 5—Continued.*

Date.	Hannibal, Mo.		Laporte, Ind.		Illinois.															
					Cairo.		Mascoutah.		La Salle.		Galva.		Carbondale.		Peoria.		Springfield.		Winnebago.	
	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.	Max.	Min.
1.	28	4	28	17	32	24	32	16	24	0	22	1	35	18	25	3	29	10	22	2
2.	30	-1	27	-3	32	14	38	6	26	-7	17	-10	31	9	23	-6	25	0	12	-10
3.	50	28	42	8	53	32	51	.....	43	26	43	16	50	25	45	23	47	25	37	8
4.	41	25	36	21	49	33	42	34	27	21	37	20	47	34	34	20	41	25	26	13
5.	41	19	35	7	50	29	50	22	34	14	34	16	48	21	35	14	42	19	33	11
6.	28	11	31	10	37	23	42	18	17	5	19	2	41	19	19	5	24	10	21	0
7.	49	23	26	4	41	25	40	20	29	10	28	10	38	17	31	13	36	18	23	4
8.	64	36	47	20	62	38	70	31	51	23	51	22	66	34	57	27	62	34	45	22
9.	50	38	55	33	64	49	63	42	49	33	47	35	66	49	48	32	52	35	45	31
10.	49	32	38	28	55	46	50	38	38	30	41	28	59	42	38	30	38	31	42	26
11.	55	36	47	28	56	36	52	32	44	33	45	32	56	34	45	31	46	30	47	22
12.	60	39	55	28	62	42	64	32	55	34	53	33	64	30	58	34	59	34	57	32
13.	57	45	65	39	62	52	64	50	57	43	58	42	61	48	59	46	58	46	58	46
14.	58	29	60	47	67	47	66	50	59	34	58	35	68	41	59	32	62	35	59	39
15.	29	22	47	24	47	27	54	26	34	22	35	20	57	28	32	22	35	23	36	18
16.	37	20	31	8	44	26	42	24	31	18	31	10	44	23	33	15	36	19	29	9
17.	61	23	35	14	57	34	60	27	45	17	46	14	59	24	51	15	55	21	36	10
18.	67	43	58	32	63	41	66	36	61	39	61	39	65	39	63	37	63	38	56	32
19.	66	46	64	35	65	49	68	38	63	42	62	40	67	42	64	43	66	41	63	41
20.	50	26	60	35	68	54	60	42	57	32	56	27	62	49	56	29	55	34	54	28
21.	33	20	48	10	61	34	55	30	32	17	31	15	61	34	34	17	37	22	28	16
22.	40	19	35	15	50	28	44	22	34	14	34	9	47	23	36	15	39	20	28	9
23.	71	39	43	29	77	49	78	36	67	33	60	30	78	38	65	35	67	36	48	25
24.	58	37	64	38	78	67	68	52	67	34	65	39	75	38	65	40	66	41	61	35
25.	38	31	40	29	72	41	52	38	34	26	40	25	69	42	40	29	41	32	35	23
26.	31	25	31	25	41	27	40	26	28	22	30	19	43	28	29	23	32	25	26	18
27.	31	21	28	25	35	25	38	18	32	23	33	19	34	24	33	21	31	23	32	17
28.	50	25	39	15	47	31	49	25	45	27	46	23	50	23	46	25	46	25	46	24
29.	59	37	54	28	60	41	60	.....	57	37	59	34	62	34	58	36	58	35	56	35
30.	74	45	61	40	68	31	78	.....	65	44	66	40	71	45	66	41	70	43	62	38
31.	62	45	59	40	66	54	66	48	56	42	57	39	66	51	58	42	59	45	55	40
Mns.	48.9	28.7	45.0	23.5	55.5	37.7	54.9	31.4*	43.9	25.4	44.0	23.4	56.1	32.5	45.3	25.5	47.6	28.2	41.2	21.4

*, b, c, etc., indicate respectively 1, 2, 3, etc., days missing from the record.

\$\$ Instruments are read in the morning; the maximum temperature then read is charged to the preceding day, on which it almost always occurs.